

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 43, 44, 57, 60, and 62 as shown below. The claims, as pending in this application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of distance-values, wherein the selection is effected such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, ~~all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded, and~~ and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values that have not been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are not excluded; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

2. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value.

3. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

4. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

5. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.

6. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.

7. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when all of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value and are not selected by the selection circuit.

8. (Currently Amended) A camera including a distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of

distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said camera comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of distance-values, wherein the selection is effected such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, ~~all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded, and~~ and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values that have not been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are not excluded;

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit; and

a driving circuit for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the auto-focusing data value computed by the computation circuit.

9. (Currently Amended) A camera according to Claim 8, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value.

10 to 14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method of individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions by a

distance-measuring device, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said method comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of distance-values, wherein the selection is effected such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, ~~all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded, and~~ and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values that have not been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are not excluded; and

computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

16. (Currently Amended) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value.

17. (Previously Presented) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

18. (Previously Presented) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

19 to 42. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium for use with a distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein comprising:

a first program code unit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of distance-values, wherein the selection is effected such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, ~~all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded, and and~~ all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values that have not been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are not excluded; and

a second program code unit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

44. (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value.

45 to 56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one measured distance-value for use in focusing, wherein the selection is effected by comparing a first measured distance-value of the plurality of distance-values to a predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value, and wherein if the first measured distance-value is greater than or equal to the predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value, said selection circuit compares a second measured distance-value of the plurality of distance-values to the predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value and excludes the first measured distance-value from being selected; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit,

wherein if the second measured distance-value is greater than or equal to the predetermined ~~distance-value~~ distance-value, said selection circuit excludes the second measured distance-value from being selected, and

~~wherein said selection circuit excludes all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value and does not exclude any other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values~~

wherein said selection circuit compares measured distance values in descending order to the predetermined distance-value.

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the plurality of distance-values before said selection circuit performs the selection.

60. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible ~~distance-value~~ distance-value.

61. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the plurality of distance-values,

wherein said selection circuit performs the selection and exclusion upon the ordered plurality of distance-values in accordance with the predetermined order.

62. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit which selects, from the plurality of distance-values, at least one measured distance-value, ~~between~~ not less than the shortest distance-value where focusing operation is possible and not more than a predetermined distance-value, without taking into account the position in the image plane of the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

63. (Previously Presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 62, wherein when said selection circuit selects a plurality of distance-values, and said computation circuit performs the computation of the auto-focusing data value as the average of the plurality of selected distance-values.